Issue 36 | Mar 2012

blender art MAGAZINE

Blender learning made easy...

Odds n' Ends!

BigBang Tutorial

How to add props to improve your scene

Quick Texturing Technique

Loop Tool

Build it or Not

www.blenderart.org

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COVER ART
You - by Adrian Kubasa

Upcomming Issue 37 - "Cool Tools"

Looking for tutorials or "making of" articles on:

- Use of any feature or tool in blender (stable or test builds)
- Useful Add-ons
- Modeling or animation of Real world tools

EDITORIAL

Sandra Gilbert

Manager/Editor

"No matter what Blender projects you have planned for this year, at some point you will need a variety of "Odds n' Ends" to flesh it out. "

Welcome back to a new year of Blenderart fun. Now that we have all recovered from the whirlwind known as "the holidays", it is time to settle in for another fun filled year of Blender activities and projects.

No matter what Blender projects you have planned for this year, at some point you will need a variety of "Odds n' Ends" to flesh it out.

What are "Odds n' Ends"? Well they are all those props and accessories that make our characters, images, games and animations look better. They add depth and levels of detail to what might otherwise end up being a naked character standing against a gray background.

Yep, clothes count as "Odds n' Ends" too. Mainly because once you have modeled your character, there is an endless variety of styles you can use to clothe it.

Once clothed, does your character need weapons or tools? Where is your character, in the forest or an office? What is going on? Are there things to interact with? All these questions and more will help you decide what if any props and accessories you will need.

At this point you may have guessed that the "Odds n' Ends" portion of a project just might take more time than the character did. And you are probably right. You might need just a few or you might need hundreds. Depending on the level of detail you are going for, you could end up spending massive amounts of time creating all these extras.

On the upside, models can be reused, so once built, they can be tucked into your very own library of props. And just think about all the modeling practice you will get. :)

In the meantime, now is a good time to take a break from all that practice and cozy up with our latest issue of Blenderart magazine.

Enjoy!

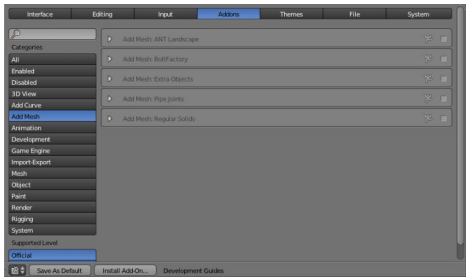
Izzy Speaks: Add-ons save the day

Izzy Speaks

When starting a project, we generally have an idea of where it is going to go. A super cool character doing some super cool thing in a super cool setting (or insert other super cool idea here). That's the plan. Unfortunately, plans get messed up for a variety of reasons. Time and skill levels are the two most common problems that mess up our beautiful plan. Or maybe once started, we decide that we really only want to focus our energy on the main character or object. All the added/extra super cool parts would take too long to model and texture.

So now what? Well we could just call it good at that point and render it out and share it with our friends. Or we could browse through the ever growing collection of Add-ons and see what we could quickly add to our scene or character to take it up a notch.

Add-ons provide added functionality to



Blender and in this case can save quite a bit of modeling time. You will still have to texture, but that can be as simple or complex as you want it to be.

Blender comes preloaded with a variety of useful Add-ons. For our purposes, the Add-ons listed under Add Curve, Add Mesh and Object in the User Preferences>Add-ons dialog are the ones we are looking for.

So what can we find in there?

Add Curves:

IvyGen: will add generated ivy to a mesh Object starting at the 3D cursor. This is a great way to quickly add some plant life to a scene.

Sapling: uses Curves to form a wide variety of trees.

Add Mesh:

ANT Landscape: adds a terrain primitive that can be adjusted to create an endless array of landscapes for your scene or character.

Bolt Factory: quickly add bolts and nuts. This Add-on also provides a number of options to change the look of the bolts and nuts.

Extra Objects: adds a few more interesting primitive Objects like wedges. Now bundled under the same Add-on you can also find:

3D Function Surfaces

Add Gear

Gemstones

Twisted Torus

Pipe Joints: adds various types of pipe joints.

Regular Solids: this Add-on creates adjustable meshes based on the 31 regular shapes as defined by mathematicians of old.

Object:

Add Chain: adds a chain object with a curve for quick creation.

Cloud Generator: lets you create volumetric clouds in a variety of shapes.

Fracture Tools: breaks apart an Object, great for bombs and explosions.

Grease Scatter Objects: allows you to use the grease pencil to draw where you would like groups of Objects to be scattered around the scene. Think leaves and debris.

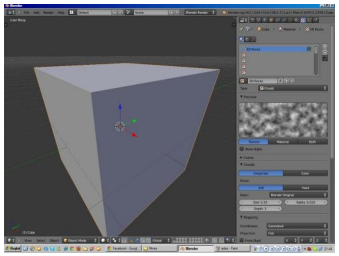
Quite a lot can be accomplished with these Add-ons and these are just the ones that are included in Blender. There are many more that are being written and released in the community. The BlenderWiki has a large list of Add-ons that are available to play with.

So browse through the lists and keep an eye out on the various forums for announcements of cool new Add-ons. They can save you a lot of modeling time, allowing you to focus on the main part of your project ●

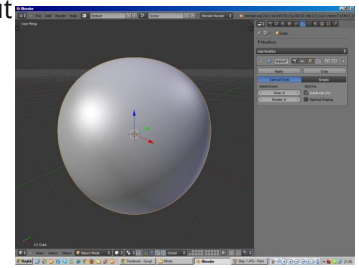
by - **Hakki Riza KUCUK**

Introduction

Step 1- At the first step, I selected the default cube and went to the texture panel to create a clouds texture (as shown in the picture). I renamed it: 3D Rocks. Then, I deselect the texture because we will use this texture for shaping the rocks and not for the color. The cloud texture's settings are 0.35 for size and 3 for depth.

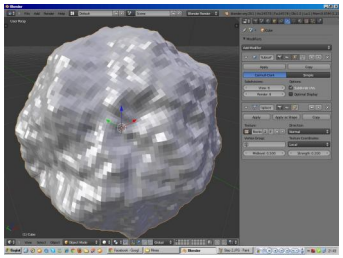


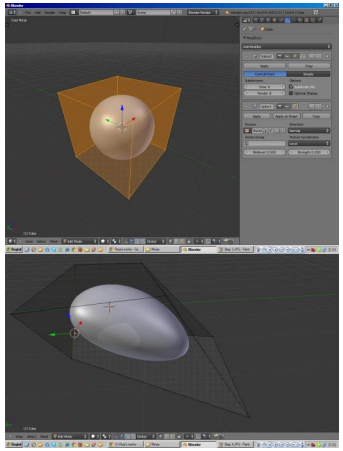
Step 2- I went to the modifier context and added a subdivision surface modifier. I increased the settings to 6 for both render and view. I did that because we need a lot of surface for a good rock. But never forget that if you want to create a realistic rock, don't use the "smooth" button.



Step 3- Next I added a displacement modifier and I choose the texture named "3D Rocks". Later, I reduced the strength to 0.2. You can see that the cube is like a rock now. You can change the cloud texture settings and get different results. Also, you can play with the direction settings in the displacement modifier and get a good result. But we will do this later.

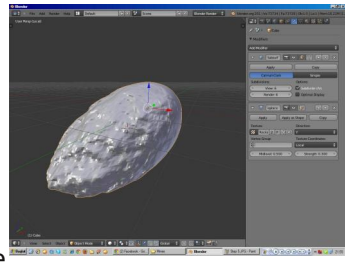
Step 4 and 5- I switched to Edit mode, selected a random vertex and I moved it randomly. As in the picture, I did this for every vertex. I did this because the rocks won't be shaped like a ball. They will be irregular. That is why I moved the vertices around.



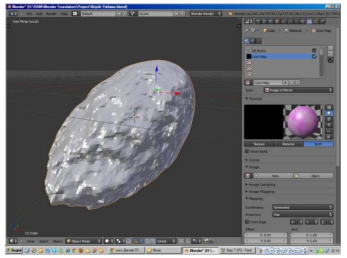


Step 6- I went back to Object mode and I played with the direction setting. Summary: direction setting + shapeless Object=good result for a rock. Don't forget that you don't have to change the direction setting from normal. Anyway, let's do some different rocks !

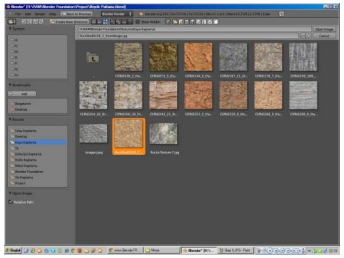
Step 7- As in the picture, I duplicated the rock twice. I changed their displacement settings and also changed their size by using "S". Finally, I achieved three different rocks. You can follow what I'm doing by the pictures!



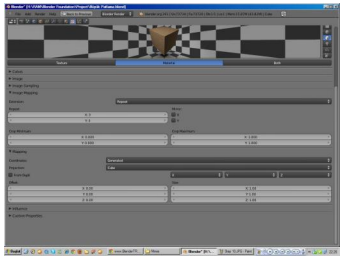
Step 8-9 and 10- Now, we will add a color texture for the rocks. I added a new texture and renamed it as Color Map. Then, you can choose Image or Movie. I then opened the image mapping settings and increased the x and y number to 3. Don't forget that you may need to change the number of x and y. If your object is too big, you must increase the number of x



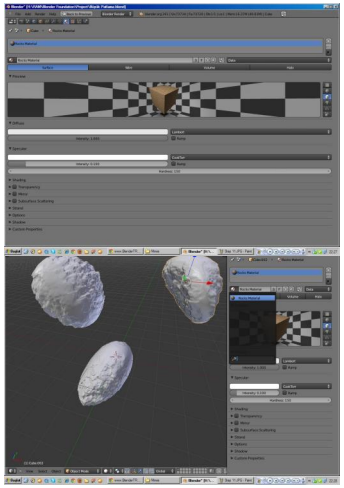
and y. Don't be afraid to try some different settings to get some original rocks.



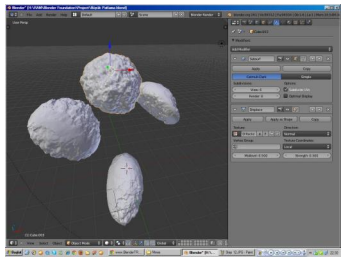
The last thing to set up here is the mapping setting. I opened it and I changed flat to cube. I did this because the rock is a shapeless object. We use flat for 2D objects and UV mapping texture. We use cube for cubes and shapeless objects, sphere mapping for ball shaped objects and tubes for cylindrical objects. Try all of them and check the preview screen!



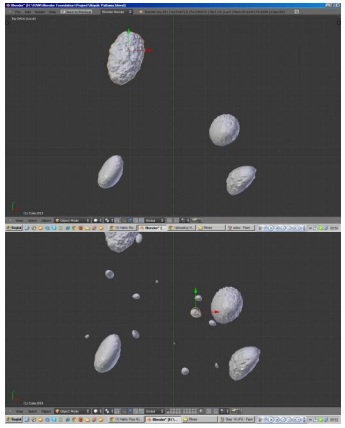
Step 11 and 12- Firstly, I went to the material setting and renamed it as Rock Material. Then, I reduced the specular intensity to 0.1. I also increased the hardness to 150. If the material is not selected for other rocks, select them as shown in the picture.



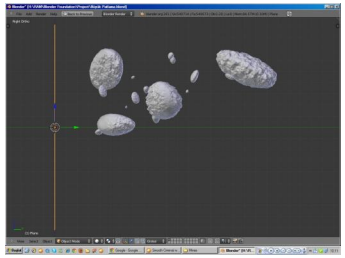
Step 13- I created a 4th rock. Of course, you can create more rocks for your scene. Maybe one big rock or a lot of medium rocks. This is the best thing of 3D WORLD. You can do what you want!



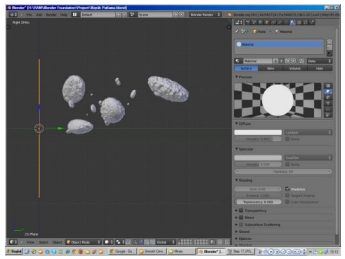
Step 14 and 15- I moved them as shown in the picture and I rotated them by pressing "R" twice (to enable trackball rotation). Then, I duplicate the rocks a lot of times and resized the new rocks to be smaller. I also changed their displacement settings (particularly the direction and strength settings). Look at the pictures and check your settings!



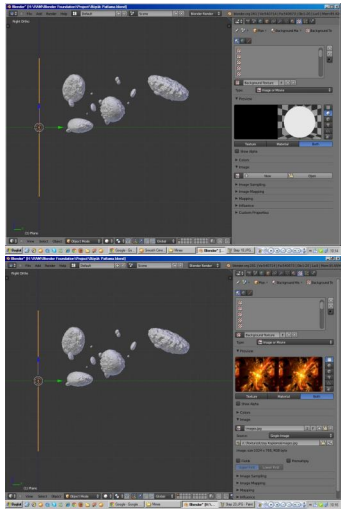
Step 16 and 17- I added a new plane and I moved it opposite the rocks (see the picture). This plane will be our background. When you saw the render result first, you may have thought that you'll learn how to create a fire simulation. But sorry, this is just a background image :) .



Step 18- I added a new material and I selected the shadeless option because I don't want the plane to get anything from the lights when we add them.

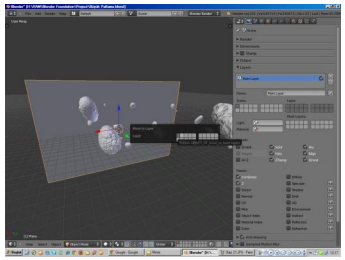


Step 19-20 and 21- I went to the texture panel and added a new texture. Then, I choose image or movie and I added a new image. You can see the image's link at the end of the tutorial.

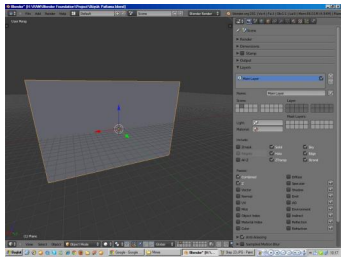


Step 22- Now, I will move the plane to another

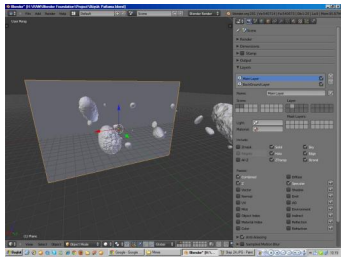
layer by "M" for compositing. Actually, I can't write the compositing settings in this tutorial, but still, I am showing this. Also, you can see the plane's location exactly in this picture.

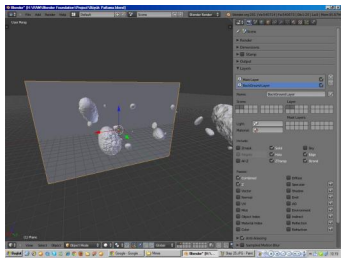


Step 23 and 24- To make sure all the objects stay visible, select the first layer, then hold SHIFT and select the second layer.



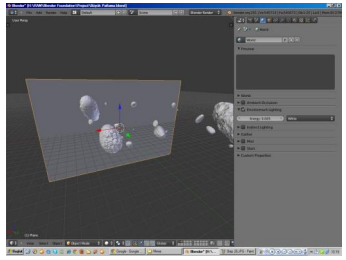
Step 25 and 26- I then renamed the render layers. One of them is Main Layer, and the other is Background Layer. Also for compositing, we have to be careful with the layer settings. I will explain quickly. In the Main Render Layer, every layer is selected except the second layer. Specular is set to on.



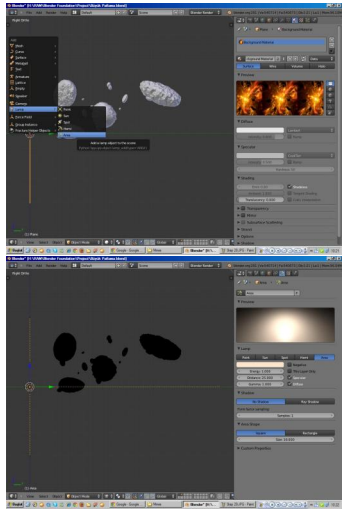


In the Background Render Layer, the first and second layers are selected. You can select all layers because all the objects are in the first or second layer. The other layers are empty. That is why you don't have to select the other layer for both the Main and Background Render Layer. The sky isn't selected for the Background Render layer either. Anyway, ehm.... just look at the pictures, and try to mimic me. When you make your scene in future, you will learn why you made all the settings.

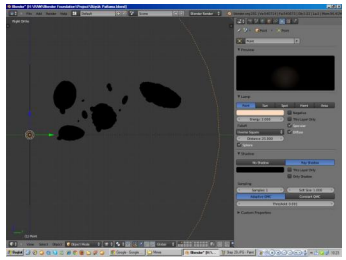
Step 27- Let's go to world settings ! Just set environment lighting to 0.005. Okay, it is not exciting, but it is easy, yeah? You can guess why we did this. For environment lighting :) !



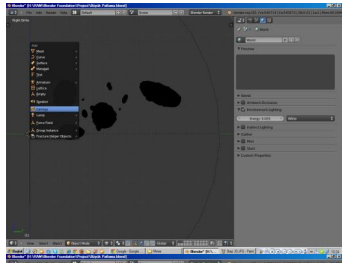
Step 28 and 29- Now, we will add some light. This part is really important for a realistic render. I added an area lamp and I moved it like the plane. (you can see it in the picture). I also changed the color of light to make it a little red.

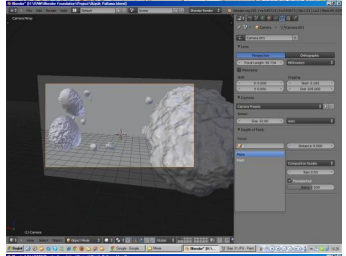


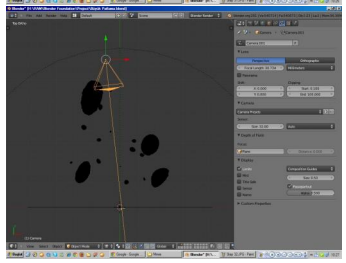
Step 30- I added a new point lamp and I moved it to the center of the plane. I changed the color of the point lamp to be similar to the area lamp. I also set shadows to ray shadow. So easy, so simple.



Step 31-32 and 33- I added a new camera and I moved it by CTRL+ALT+Numlock 0. Optionally, I moved it behind a rock. Step 32 is for compositing setting. It doesn't matter but still I can explain: I selected limit and then, I choose the plane as in the picture. This setting is for defocus, (depth of field). You can see the FINAL SCENE in the 33rd picture.





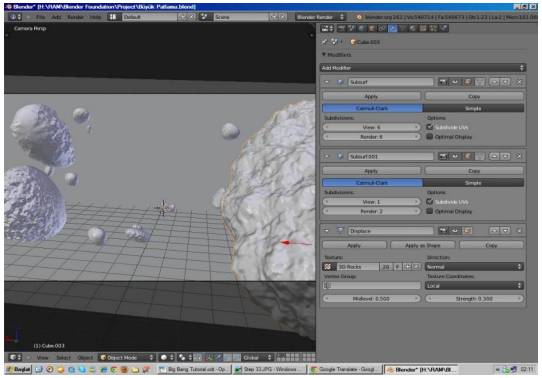


Step 34- And the Render ! You can

3D WORKSHOP : Big Bang Tutorial

see that we are done ! Just press F12 and see your result ! In the render, the shadows are too black but they aren't full black. They are just a little bit bright because of the environment lighting. The rocks are shapeless and have got more polygon. There are some little rocks in the scene. I also used GIMP for brightness of background.

Conclusion: If you want to make really good rocks, you have to use two different subdivision surfaces. The first subdivision modifier's render and view are set to 6 and the second modifier's render and view setting are set to 2. Their order is important. As shown in the picture place them in this order:



Subdivision Modifier 1, Subdivision Modifier 2 and then Displacement Modifier.

If you have any question, post an e-mail to this address: hakkirizakucuk@hotmail.com

The Texture Links:

Rock's :
http://www.cgtextures.com/login.php?&texid=4462&destination=texview.php?id=4462&PHPSESSID=b4f8c0908166e724ae33e5a927a050eb

Exploding's:
http://www.blendertr.com/viewtopic.php?f=30&t=2622

3D WORKSHOP : Quick texturing technique

by - **Randy Blose**

Introduction

In this article I'll describe my workflow for texturing my mechanical creations. Using both Blender and GIMP, I quickly create color, bump and specular maps. Blender's texture paint is used to start the texturing. From here, I use GIMP's layers and layer masks to quickly add more detail and create the bump and specular maps as well. The mesh I am working with is my Retro Rocket Racer, it has already been UV mapped and has a car paint material assigned to it that I downloaded from: http://matrep.parastudios.de. So let's dive into it!

A Blank Canvas:

Initially, my screen layout looks like this:

I have the 3D view, UV/Image editor, and the properties panels open. The current material is displayed and from here we can start working on the textures.

First up, we will need a blank canvas to start painting on. Left-clicking on the material's diffuse color will bring up a color picker. Select "Hex" from the three buttons below the color wheel. Now the color values for the material are displayed as one set of letters and numbers (hexadecimal format). Mouse over the value and use [Ctrl+C] to copy it.

Now open GIMP and create a new image. For this project I used an image that was 1024x1024 in size. Left-clicking on the foreground color in GIMP opens a 'Change Foreground Color' window. Move the mouse to the 'HTML notation' field and use [Ctrl+V] to paste the color value. Now use the Bucket Fill Tool to change the color of the image to match the color of Blender's material. Save the image with a meaningful name and in a format blender can use (I use .png format). This is our blank canvas.

In Blender, with a material assigned to the mesh, switch the Properties panel to Textures. If no textures have been created yet, the panel won't contain much information, that's about to change.

Left-clicking on the 'New' button will create a new texture slot and we will be presented with a wealth of data. Right below the texture ID name will be a 'Type' selection box and left-clicking on that box will allow you to choose what type of texture we will be working with. Choose 'Image or Movie' from the pop-up menu. Scroll through the texture panel to the 'Mapping' section to adjust a few settings. 'Coordinates' needs to be set to 'UV' (since the mesh has been UV-unwrapped) and upon doing so a new 'Layer' field appears. Set that to 'UVTex'.

Scroll to the 'Image' panel, click on the 'Open' button and select the new blank canvas image just saved from GIMP to load the image. Select the mesh in the 3D window and enter edit mode. Use the [A-key] to select all the vertices. In the UV Image editor's header, left-click on the image icon and select the image that was just loaded into Blender. Now our mesh is set up to use the new image as a color map.

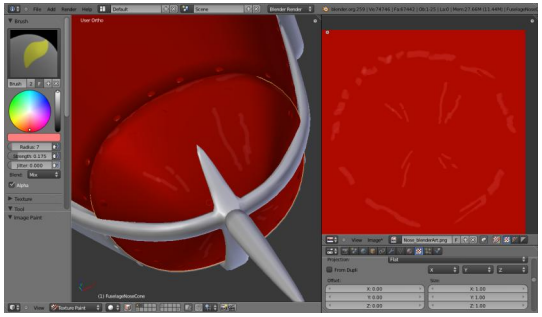
In the 3D view, we have a few more settings to be changed. In the 3D view's header. Switch 'Viewport Shading' to 'Textured'. In the transforms panel [N-key] under 'Display', set 'Shading' to 'GLSL'.

(Note: for this to work, your model will

have to be lit by lights. I usually place a few 'Point' lamps around the object to light it from all sides.)

We now have everything set up for Blender's texture painting tools.

In the 3D view, you can now enter Texture Paint mode. Select the 'Brush' from the tools panel, use the color wheel to select a color close to the one we will be painting over and turn the strength of the brush down quite a bit. At this point you need to think about what parts of your mesh will show signs of dirt/scratches and start painting them on the mesh. Rotate around the model, and paint the areas where you want to add dirt/scratches. This is my result after a few paint strokes where I want dirt/scratches:



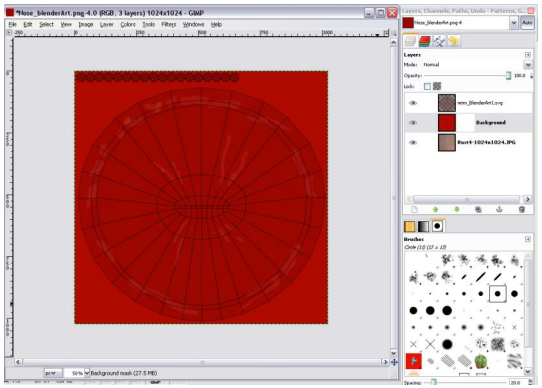
From the UV/Image editor's header select Image>>Save Image to save our work so far. This will be the basis of the color map, so now it's time to move over to GIMP to refine it.

Into GIMP:

Once you're in GIMP, load the color map just saved in Blender. After that, use 'File' menu >> 'Open as Layers...' to load in the UV Layout from Blender.

Now we need one more texture in GIMP and this one will depend upon the look we want. Should this look be dirt, scratches or rust? I've decided on rust, so in GIMP go to 'File' >> 'Open as Layers...' and choose a rust image that's the same size or bigger than the texture we're working on. Time to organize this mess...

Arrange the layers as follows: the UV Layout should be on top while the next layer should be the color map saved from Blender after texture painting. The bottom layer should be the image that has the look we are after, in this case the rust image. Right clicking on the color map layer opens a menu where we can select >> 'Add Layer Mask' to add a layer mask. From the next pop-up prompt choose >>'White (full opacity)'. My layers in GIMP look like this:



After creating the layer mask in GIMP, it is now the active image that will be painted on. It can be a little confusing at first, as the active image in GIMP is outlined in white and the layer mask is white as well. Left clicking on the color map will make it active, left clicking on the layer mask (to the right of the color map) will make it the active image to be painted. This layer mask on the color map is hiding the rust texture layer below it.

Layer masks in GIMP are grayscale images that control the visibility of the layer below it. The darker the layer mask is, the more transparent the layer mask is and the more visible the layer below it will become. Likewise, the closer to white the layer mask is, the more invisible the layer below it will be.

Using the Paintbrush Tool, and using various shades of grey colors, brushes (air brush style brushes work best here) and brush sizes, slowly work to reveal the rust texture following the guidelines on the color map from Blender's texture paint. During this process, keep changing the brush pattern often, (I have 8~10 grunge type brushes), to avoid a repeating pattern of the brush. The Smudge Tool is very helpful during this process as well by smudging away any repeating pattern created by the brushes.

SideNote:

As I mentioned at the beginning, the model has been UV unwrapped. I export my UV Layout as .svg files. GIMP handles them just fine and they tend to be more transparent than .png files, which helps in the next step.

3D WORKSHOP : Quick texturing technique

When the layer mask has been painted enough to give a general idea of what areas will be painted, switch over to work on the color map. On the color map, select the base color and paint over the guidelines painted in Blender to hide them. Then go back to the layer mask to finish it up. After a few minutes work on the layer mask, this is my image (UV Layout shown for reference):

The UV Layout layer's visibility can be controlled by the 'eye' icon on that layer. the UV Layout layer's opacity can also be controlled via a slider at the top of the Layers window.

Save the image first in GIMP's .xcf format, in case we wish to edit this image later. Now disable the layer that has the UV Layout on it by clicking on the 'eye' icon. Make sure the color image and not the layer mask is active and save this image with a meaningful name and in a format Blender can handle (I save as a .png image, which doesn't support layers). GIMP will now prompt that .png doesn't support layers, just left click on 'Export' and at the next prompt left click on 'Save' to save the file. I generally use 'color' as part of the name, since this is our color map.

Next, right click on the layer with the layer mask and from the menu choose >> Show Layer Mask. Right click again on this layer and from the menu choose >> New from Visible. Now GIMP has created a new layer that is just our grayscale layer mask. Make this the only visible layer (eye icon) and save the image with a meaningful name and in a format Blender can handle, (Again, there will be a series of prompts to click through). This image is what will be used in Blender for bump and specular maps and I generally use 'bump' as part of the filename.

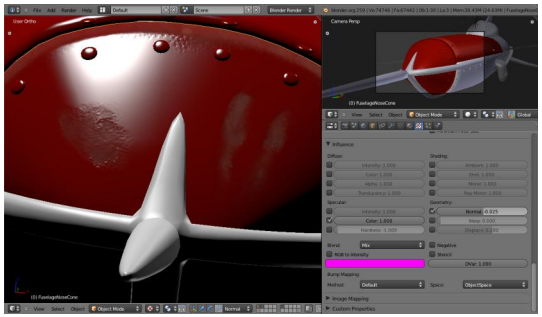
Speaking of Blender, it's time to return to Blender to finish up.

Back in Blender:

The image previously created in Texture Paint can now be replaced with the new color map saved from GIMP. In the Texture panel, with the current texture active, scroll to the 'Image' panel and load in the new color map. With the 3D View set to Textured display (as previously described), the new color map is now displayed on the mesh. We aren't done yet, remember the black and white image saved from GIMP?.

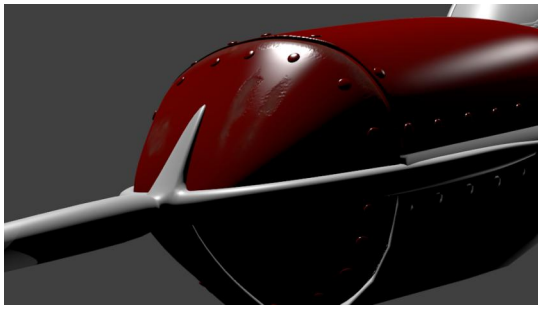
In the Texture panel, select the empty texture slot below the color map texture and left-click on the 'New' button to add a new texture slot. Just as before, set it to be an image texture, adjust the mapping settings, and load in our grayscale bump map saved from GIMP. By default, this new image will affect the color of the mesh and will look really strange on your screen, so we need to make a few more adjustments...

Scroll through the texture panel to the Influence panel. Under 'Diffuse', uncheck 'Color' and your display should return to just the color map since this texture no longer affects the color, (by default, new textures influence the color of the mesh). We need this texture to be our bump map and also affect the specular color. So under 'Specular', check the box by the 'Color' and under "Geometry', check the 'Normal' checkbox. The mesh may now look a bit distorted (or in my case, a lot distorted), but that can be fixed via the 'Normal' slider. The 'Normal' slider needs to be adjusted to the point where the bump map barely affects the surface of the mesh. Since this is a rust texture, the surface of the mesh should only be slightly affected. I settled for a value of -.025 to give the mesh a slight indentation where the rust is.



3D WORKSHOP : Quick texturing technique

In the real world, rust is never smooth. It can range from being slightly rough, to really blistering and bumpy. To achieve a bumpy blistering rust, use a positive value so the mesh is raised where the rust colors are. Here's a close up rendering of the results:



Taking it a step further:

This technique of using layers and layer masks in GIMP can be expanded further. I have used this method with a dark texture and used the layer mask to reveal the dark texture to add dirt to the mesh's color map. I then duplicated the color and dark texture layers, merged them down into a single image, added a layer mask to the new image and a rust texture layer below it to add rust.

I then duplicated and merged these layers to produce a new image. A layer mask was added to the new image as well as a bright steel texture below that. I edited the layer mask to reveal the bright steel texture to produce scratches. I created bump maps at each step by displaying the layer mask, right clicking on the layer and choosing >> 'New from Visible' from the menu.

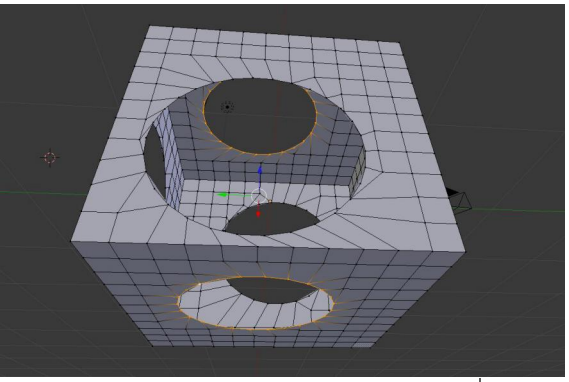
This can obviously become very complex in GIMP, but careful naming of the layers in GIMP can help you keep track of what each layer is for.

Final Thoughts:

The aim of this article was to provide a basic workflow for creating bump and specular maps quickly using GIMP. This was a method I used while working in the older Blender 2.49. With all the great work from the developers working on the new Blender 2.5x/2.6x versions, there have been a lot of great things added that I have not mentioned here. Now that Blender has the ability to display bump maps in the 3D viewport, bump maps can be painted in Texture Paint mode and the results can be seen on screen (it's almost like sculpting in fine details without using the multi-resolution modifier).

One can also use custom brushes in Texture Paint mode and there is even an Add-on called 'Material Utils' that allows one to quickly switch which texture layer is currently being painted on as well as a few other goodies for texture painting. I regret I did not touch on these topics in this article, but now, thinking of all the texturing goodies in Blender, I'm beginning to think one could write a whole book on the subject!

3D WORKSHOP : Loop Tool Tutorial

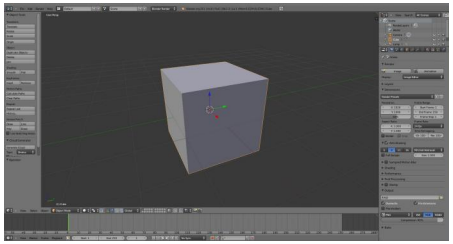


by - **Krzysztof Bozalek**

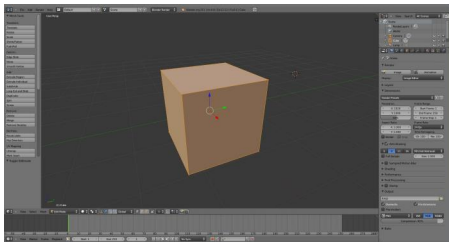
Introduction

In this tutorial you will learn how to use Blenders loop tools for a complicated set of modeling tasks. Using loop tolls in Blender is a bit trickey and this step by step tutorial will get you through it.

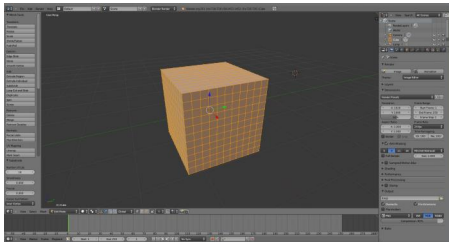
Use default Blender cube.



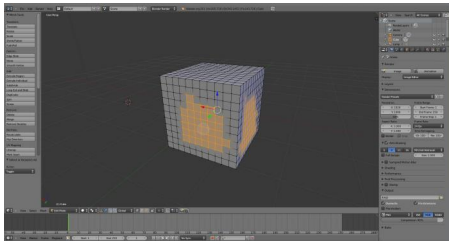
Go to edit mode (Tab).



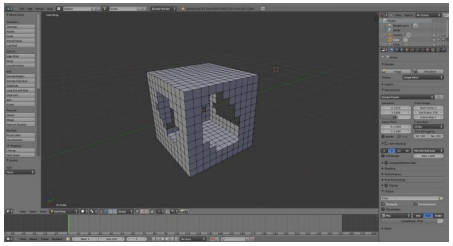
Subdivide x10 (W)



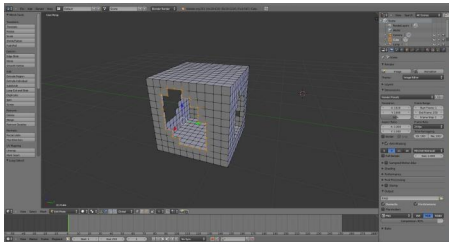
Select random vertices on the sides of the cube (C for circle shaped selector).



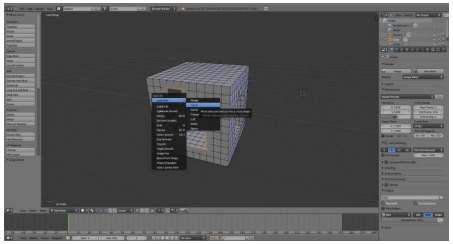
Delete all the selected faces (X).



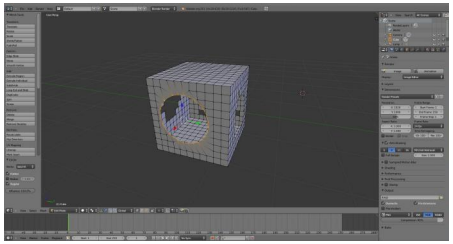
Select the inner shape (Alt + Shift + Right Mouse button).



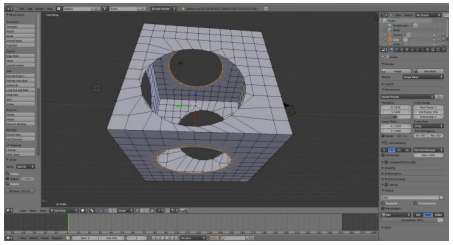
Loop tool and choose circle (W).



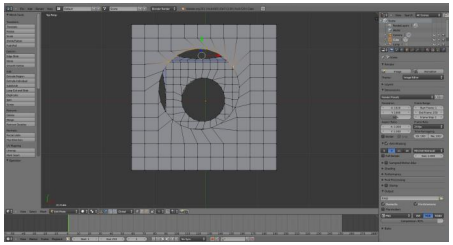
Use this technique on all the sides.



Go to top view (Num 7). Select the top part of the circle.

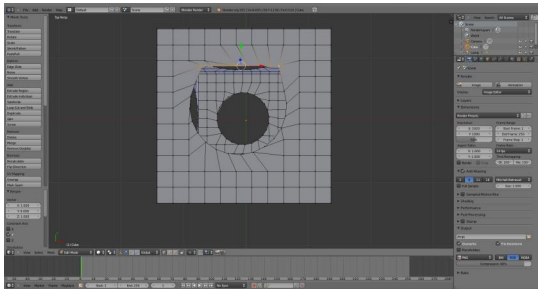


Scale (S Y 0).

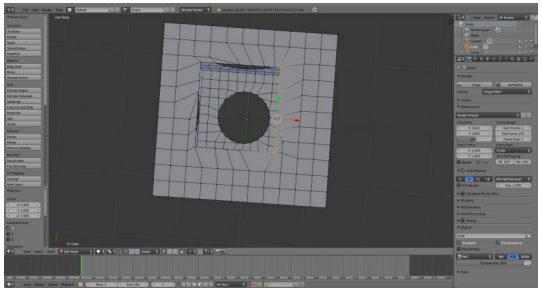


3D WORKSHOP : Loop Tool Tutorial

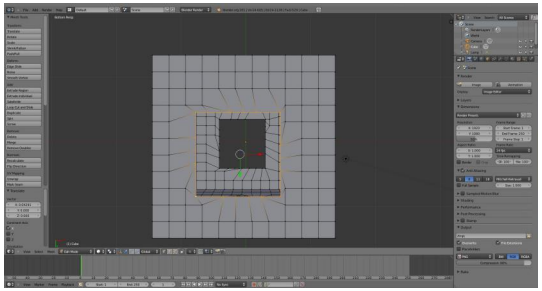
Use this technique to create a square, substituting S Y 0 with S Z 0 or S X 0 where appropriate.



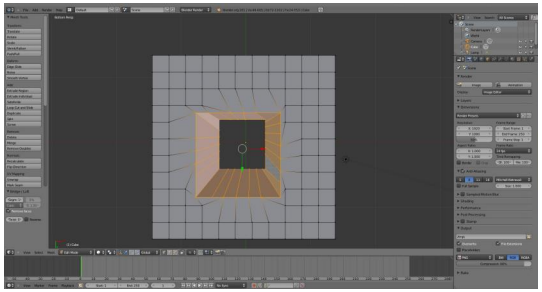
Repeat on the circle on the opposite side.



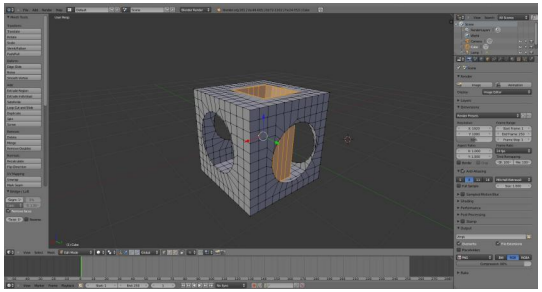
Select both squares.



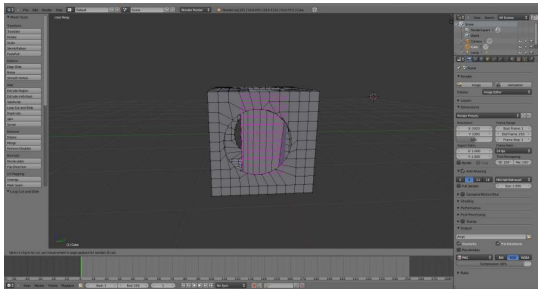
Loop tool. “Bridge” (W).



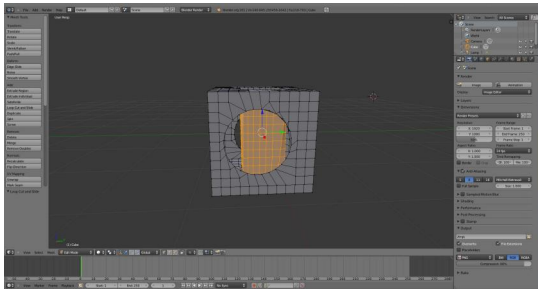
Go to Side view.



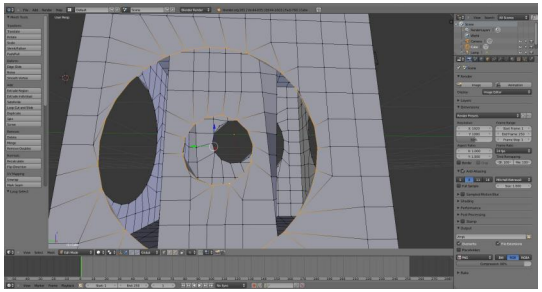
Add some loop cuts. X 10 (Ctrl + R then scroll the mouse wheel).



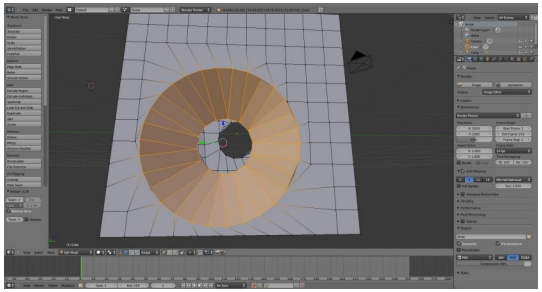
Cut the circle holes in the bridge.



Select a circle on the cube and one on the bridge.



Loop Tool. Bridge (W).



Repeat on all the sides. Needs some tweaking, but you can get the general idea. Thanks

KNOW HOW : How to improve your images by adding props

by - **Benjamin Scotford**

Introduction

This is the scene we will be looking at in this article

At the moment this scene looks ok, (pretty reasonable actually), but it is still lacking quite a bit of detail, color, and life.

Here is a list of 3 problems I want to fix to make my image better:

1. I want it to be easily recognized as a happy, cartoon style (but still realistic) floating island with a house built on top of it. At the moment however, it looks like it could be a house that has been dug up and thrown into the air.
2. I want it to look as if someone is currently living in it and has been for a while. At the moment however, there are no signs that anyone is living in it.
3. I want it to be able to catch your eye.

Of course at the moment it doesn't quite have enough in it to make you stop and look at it.

Lets get started fixing up this image.

This is what the finished product will look like. As you can see, there aren't HEAPS of changes, but enough to fix the problems listed above.

I'm going to take you through the steps I used to give you the finished product.

1. The smoke rising out of the chimney.

First off, why are we adding this?

Because it will show us that this is a functioning house that has been here for a while (which answers problem 1). It tells us that: someone is currently living in this house, it adds some more color to the scene and fills in a little bit of the space above the house. It also tells us that the chimney is being used and not just there for decoration.

Now we know why to add this, why not learn how?

(If you would prefer to watch this tutorial as a video rather than reading it, you can click here)

It is very quick and easy to make this smoke because we will be using the **cloud generator** Add-on.

As the name suggests, this generator is normally used for making clouds but it also works well for making smoke.

1. First, go to the User Preferences window (File --> User Preferences) and then to the Add-ons panel. Using the search box, search for "Cloud" and you should be able to find the cloud generator. Enable this Add-on by checking the box next to it. You can now close the User Preferences window.
2. Next, add a cube and in the toolbar, you should be able to see a panel called "Cloud Generator". Select your cube and then press "Generate Cloud"
3. Ta-da! You're finished! It doesn't get much easier than that!

2. The Weeds (Long grass by the house) Why are we adding these?

They show us that this house has

KNOW HOW : How to improve your images by adding props

been here for a while (this adds to the 'feel' we are going for). They also add some more color and variation to the scene.

Take a look at the original scene, it doesn't look quite right and it looks too perfect without it. The weeds make the house look more realistic and soften the edge around the base of the house.

How? It is VERY easy to make these, just add a plane, model it, texture it and Ta-da! Grass!

Of course I didn't tell you EVERY little step that goes into making this grass but Andrew Price from Blenderguru.com has already made a tutorial on how to do this. So make sure you check it out.

3. Suggestions

This is a bit of a different step to the other ones and the reason I'm adding this step is because your scene is going to be very different to my scene so adding Smoke and Weeds isn't always going to provide the finishing touches you are after.

It is always good to ask for feedback and suggestions for your artwork. I usually post my images on Facebook and ask for suggestions there. So that's what I did with my image as I wasn't quite sure what else to add at this point.

I got some good suggestions which is where I got the inspiration for some of the upcoming steps

4. The Flowers (in the grass)

Why? The main reason I added these flowers was to add some more variety and color to the grass which is currently quite plain.

How? Add a cylinder and model this into a stem. Then add a sphere to go on top. Scale this sphere down along the Z axis and then add a plane. Model the plane into the shape of a petal, keeping only 4 vertices.

If the flower will be close to the camera, add a subsurf modifier. Then duplicate these petals and place them around the edge of the sphere.

5. The Flowers (in the pot)

Why? These were a suggestion I got when I posted my image on Facebook so I thought I'd add them in and see how they looked. They worked quite well and did a good job at adding some color to the scene that was not there before.

They also show you that someone lives in this house and is taking care of them

How? The stems were made in the same way as the previous flowers, but the flower part is just a sphere scaled up along the Z axis with a little bit of modeling. The pot was a circle extruded up with a little modeling and then another circle near the top for the soil.

6. The Bike

Why? This was also a suggestion I got from Facebook. I like the bike because it fills in the space on the side of the house, and adds more red to the scene which there is not very much of at the moment (except for the roof of course). Without it, there would be too much green near the bottom of the house which doesn't look too good.

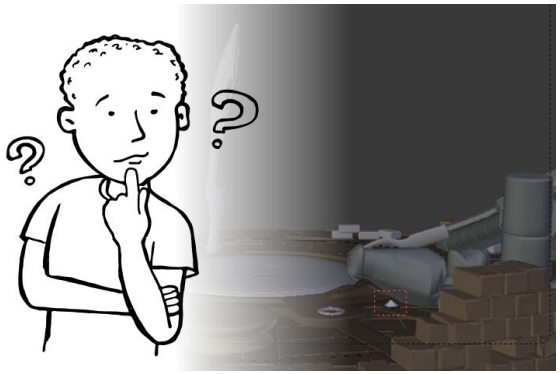
How? I just googled "Bike" and found a royalty free picture of a bike and added it into Blender as a Background Image.

Then I modeled the bike using mostly cylinders, and finally added red and black materials to finish it off.

7. Nothing

Yep, I don't really want to add anything else. I could add a few more props but I don't want there to be so much in the scene that it becomes distracting from what the image is supposed to be ●

KNOW HOW : What to do...



by - **Sandra Gilbert**

Introduction

When involved in any project, there comes a point where you have to decide whether or not you are going to cut corners. Time might be a factor. In fact, time is often a big factor when deciding how much you are going to do yourself.

I am talking about modeling. Modeling is often the most time consuming part of any project. At least for me it is. I always end up having to decide if I am going to model everything myself or if I am going to save time and download models created by others.

Blend Swap makes it very easy to download pre-made models that you can play with or add to your projects.

From the Blend Swap website:

> Blend Swap is the place to find and share blends with the entire world. You make awesome blends, share them in the biggest repository of open source 3D models made with the awesome Open Source 3D suite Blender.

They have an amazing collection of quality 3D objects created in Blender in a wide variety of categories for use and study. Most are even textured, making them ready for use in your scene with no further effort on your part. The number of available models grows daily, so check back often to see what is new.

When you have time, doing all the modeling yourself is part of the fun. But just because you want to do it yourself, doesn't mean that you couldn't use just a little help. That's where tutorials can be very helpful.

Hans Erickson has a wonderful website called CG Boomer - Blender 2.5/2.6 3D-CG where he shares his insight into Blender. He is currently working on a short film and has decided to model everything himself. The great part is that he is sharing everything he is learning along the way. At this point he has 150+ video tutorials on how to model the growing number of props and accessories that he needs for his short film.

So whether you create a model yourself or download it from Blend Swap, is up to you and what you want to accomplish •

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Step1. Choose what you want to write.

- Tutorials explaining Blender features, 3dconcepts, techniques or articles based on the focused theme of the issue.

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Step2. Send submissions to sandra@blenderart.org.

- Send us a notification on what you want to write and we can follow up from there.

Step3. Some guidelines you must follow.

- Images should be properly cut and represent the text appropriately.

- Images should be provided seperately in a folder named (images, img or pictures).

- Images should be named/labled likewise (image1 or img1 etc).

- Provide proper captions for images if and when needed.

- Image format prefered is PNG but good quality JPG can also do.

- You can submit inline images in documents like DOC or Openoffice ODT etc but make sure the images were properly names before importing them in docs.

- Images inside a PDF are a strict no, but a pdf document with images if provided to show how the author wants the formating of doc will be appreciated.

- Make sure that screenshots are clear and readable and the renders should be at least 800px, but not

- Text should be in either ODT, DOC, TXT or HTML.

Step4. Archive them using 7zip or RAR or less preferably zip.

Step5. Additional stuff that you can do

- Please include the following in your email:

- Name: This can be your full name or blenderartist avtar.

- Photograph: As PNG and maximum width of 256Px. (Only if submitting the article for the first time)

- About yourself: Max 25 words .

- Website: (optional)

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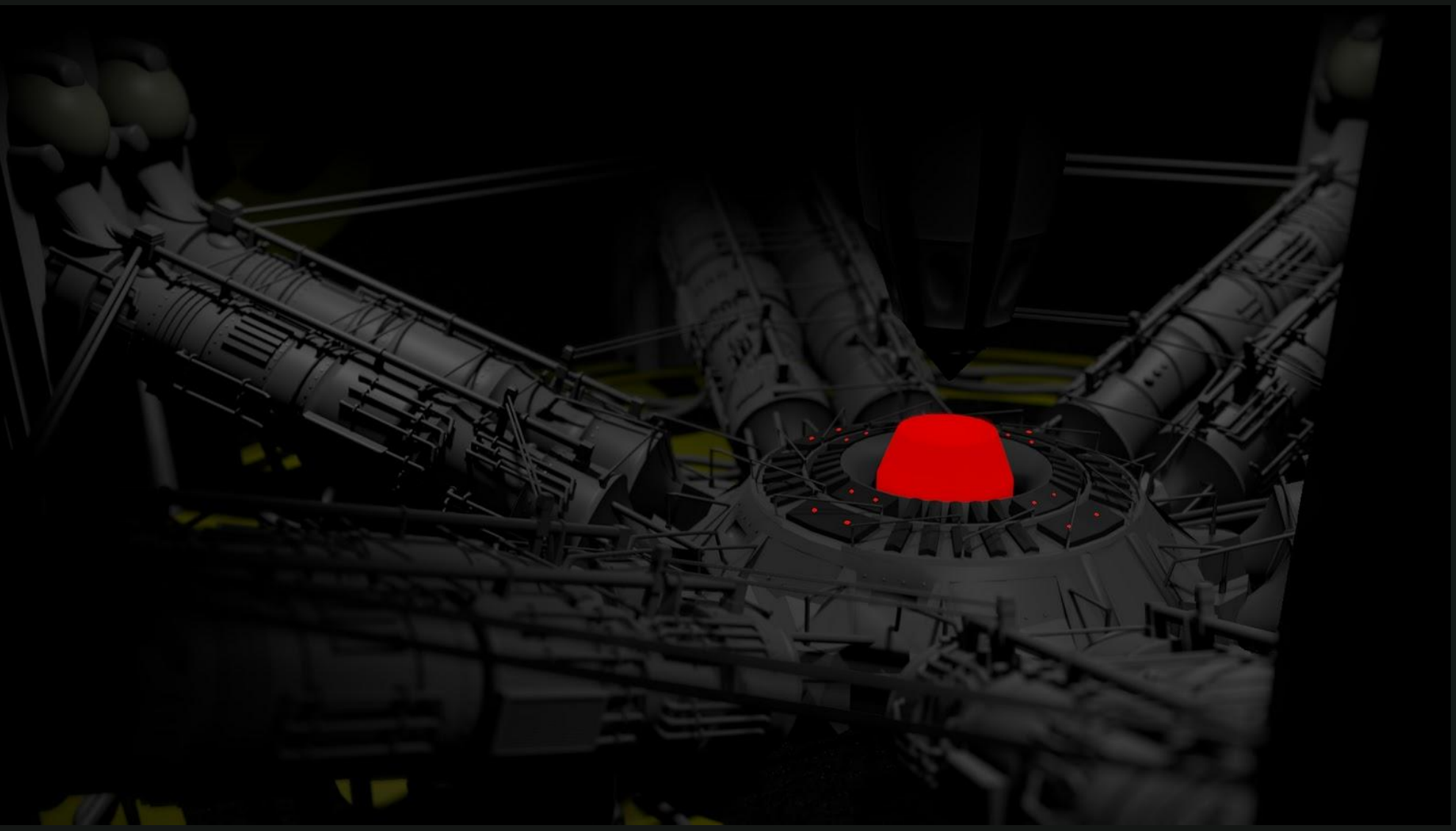

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